

Personal Statement:

Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.

Tick, tock, tick, tock. That sound filled my nights, a prelude to the inevitable BEEP of the alarm clock. While some might find it a nuisance, for me, the clock's rhythmic ticking brought a unique comfort. It marked the passage of time, a countdown to when I would set aside my tinkering cap for the day.

Every time I made the announcement "Clear out the living room; I have got an idea!" a palpable sound wave of anticipation and creativity surged through our home. When I put on my "tinkering cap," my living room turned into my workshop with new projects strewn across the floor. The room was my canvas and the tools were my brushes; with each turn of the screwdriver, a plain old watch would evolve into my piece of art. Each completed project reflected the time and effort I put into it.

My devotion to the intricate gears and springs wasn't always met with understanding though. Some saw it as detachment from reality; despite their remarks, every joke only fueled

my determination — in fact, it made me look for someone who could guide me on my tinkering journey. Seeking guidance, I spoke to my Digital Electronics teacher, Mr. O'Neil who not only introduced me to embedded systems but also became my mentor. He provided clarity and direction for my aspirations.

Through his guidance, months of effort culminated in my magnum opus — a wristwatch that seamlessly married analog charm with digital prowess. As a first-time creator, I designed it with a unique aesthetic. Its sleek black casing with a blue LED display is uncommon in traditional watchmaking. After presenting my creation to my parents, their eyes gleamed, and Mr. O'Neil gave me a silent nod; I cherished these accolades the most.

Having disassembled and reimaged lots of wristwatches, I understood that my craft was not only about creating the next big thing. It became a ritual, a journey, through the history of watchmaking, combining age-old knowledge with modern innovation. On display at the local STEM fair due to its distinctive design, its unique visage drew a constellation of curious minds. Students came up, curious about my timepiece, and each of their questions sparked engaging discussions. I shared with them how every aspect of my creation was a journey of learning and character-building, hoping to inspire them with my experiences.

Through this journey, I delved into the history of tinkering, where I discovered that engineering and artistry have been intricately linked in the technological field for years. Each

gear and tick narrates the story of what the watch meant to me, and pursuing electrical engineering would allow me to understand the electronic components in modern watchmaking. This knowledge will enhance my ability to integrate digital features into traditional watch designs, allowing me to craft innovative timepieces right in my room, which serves as my creative canvas.

In exploring new ideas, we build upon the work of those who came before us, learning from their discoveries and using them as a foundation for our innovations. Every time the alarm goes off, I am reminded of the bright minds of the past and the limitless possibilities. Mr. O'Neil's teaching went beyond just technical knowledge. From him, I learned to be resourceful and find solutions where others only saw problems. These lessons molded not only my watch design but also my approach to every challenge, and it became an integral part of my technical outlook.

Each tick of my alarm clock reminds me of the endless possibilities ahead—the curious students at the fair, and the valuable lessons from my mentor. With my tinkering cap, I realize that true craftsmanship goes beyond just creating watches. This journey was not about the physical piece I built, but rather the skills, knowledge, and passion I developed along the way, all of which are ready to be passed to the next pair of willing hands.